IV. Queries Resolved.

I. *Whether it be lawful to assist a Prince in the Persecution of the True Religion?*

But if you Bite and Devour one another, take heed that ye be not Consumed one of another, Gal. 5. 15.

Brother goeth to Law with Brother, and that before the Unbelievers: Now therefore there is utterly a Fault amongst you, because you go to Law one with another. 1 Cor. 6. 6.

FRom these two Texts it will clearly and naturally follow, That as the Christians of all Ages were separated from, and hated by all the rest of the World; so they were under the strictest Obligations to have a very great Love and Affection each to other, and to do nothing that might in the least tend to the Ruine, Impoverishing or Destroying of each other.

From hence I infer: That if one Christians going to Law against another for the Recovery of his just Right, was a Fault, when done before an Unbelieving Judge, that much more was it a Sin to betray a Brother into the Hands of such a Judge, in the Times of Persecution for Religion: And it was a greater Fault, yet to draw his Sword against a fellow Christian, to aid and assist a Persecuting Prince, in the very Act of Persecuting the Church.

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The Biting and Devouring one the other tended more naturally to the consuming of them, than any Force from those without; and in that lies the Force of the Apostolick Caution, which is so very plain and self-evident, that it cannot be inforced beyond what it at first appears.

II. *Whether it be Lawful to Desert a Persecuting Prince, when there seemes to be no other way to Preserve the True Religion, or the staying with him may promote the Ruine of it?*

I say it is Lawful and Necessary. *He that loveth Father and Mother more than me, is not worthy of me*; Matth. 10. 37. A Child is bound in this Case to forsake his Father, a Citizen his City, a Subject his Prince. To this Purpose *Tertullian* applies that Passage, *No Man can serve two Masters*; *de Corona*, c. 1. And truly, without Doubt; for if my Prince will set himself in opposition to God, and make it his principal business to destroy the Church, and this is notorious and apparent, and not founded on Surmises; then I am free from those Obligations to assist and defend him in that, and perhaps in any other thing, as long as I see him persist in that Course. Nay, I were a Persecutor, if I should any way Aid or Abet him in it. And I could not plead in my own Justification, That I was his Subject, and bound to assist and defend him, when he is persecuting and destroying my Brethren.

Concilium Arelat. can 2. *de his qui arma projiciunt in pace, placuit abstinere eos a communione.* 'Those who refuse to bear 'Arms when the Church is in Peace, 'shall be Excommunicated. Which supposeth they might, or rather ought, to refuse, in time of Persecution. Cited by *Grotius, de Jure Belli & Pacis, lib.* 1. *c.* 2. § 9.

See *Tertullian de corona, cap.* 11. upon which *Rigaltius* hath this Note. *Qui non permisit ut Christianus Ethnico, belligeranti, navaret operam, an permissurus est, ut Christiano, Christianos, hoc est fratres persecuturo se militem adjungat?*

But then, if by staying with him, and fighting for him, he will be, and continue in a Condition of persecuting the Church; and on the contrary, my leaving him will disable him from the other, then I am bound to forsake him, because the not forsaking is a direct assisting and enabling him to persecute; which I had above proved to be utterly Unlawful.

III. *If*

III. *If the Perſecuting Prince be forced to withdraw, or be vanquiſhed and flee, is it Lawful to ſubmit to the Lawful Heir of that Prince?*

I ſay Yes. No Nation can ſubſiſt long in a ſtate of *Anarchy*, and it is utterly unlawful to procure the Ruine of a Nation which involves in it the Ruine of the *Church*; ſo that if the Perſecuting Prince flee, there muſt be ſome body ſet up in his Place; for without Government no Nation can ſubſiſt.

The *Roman* Empire was Elective, and the Chriſtians of the firſt Ages never concern'd themſelves for thoſe Princes which perſecuted them, but ſubmitted and paid the ſame Obedience to all their Succeſſors. So when *Valerian* became a Perſecuter of the Church, and was after that taken Priſoner by *Sapores* King of *Perſia*, they ſubmitted to *Galienus* his Son. *Etiam hoc ei acceſſit ad pœnam, quod cum filium haberet Imperatorem captivitatis ſuæ, tamen ab ſervitutis extremæ non invenit ultorem, nec omnino repetitus eſt*; ſaith *Lactantius*, *De Mortibus Perſecutorum*. *He had this added to his puniſhment, that though he had a Son who ſucceeded him in the Empire, yet the extream Slavery and Captivity in which he lived was never revenged; nor was he ever demanded of his Enemies.* Though this was a Fault in his Son, yet it was none in the Chriſtians who had been his Subjects. And after this, when *Licinius* did the ſame thing, and was taken Priſoner by *Conſtantine* the Great, and confined to *Theſſalonica*, in the Year 324. we find no mention made of any ſcruple the Primitive Chriſtians, who were his Subjects, made to ſubmit to their Deliverer, though *Licinius* lived a year after this in *Greece*.

The Fathers of the Council of *Nice*, many of which had been his Subjects, in their Eleventh Canon, have theſe Words, ὁ γενὸς ἐπὶ τῆς Τυραννίδος, *as it happened under the Tyranny of* Licinius; It is not improbable he was then living: yet they made no ſcruple to call him a *Tyrant*, becauſe he perſecuted the Church of God. And I leave it to any rational man to judge, whether the Fathers of this Council would have ever thought themſelves bound in Conſcience to have recall'd this Tyrant to the *Throne*, and to have ſuffered under him whatever miſchief he could have inflicted upon them, only becauſe he was once their lawful Prince. Or did any of their Anceſtors ever Addreſs to *Galien* to redeem, or demand *Valerian* his Father,

ther, though he lived in a most intolerable Slavery under the King of *Persia?*

But we are sworn not only to the King in Being, but to his Heirs and lawful Successors; and therefore we are bound to set up the next *Lawful Heir*, and no body else, even by that Oath; but then we are not bound to recal one whom we have been necessitated not to assist, that we might not be accessory by so doing, to the Ruine of our Church.

IV. *Whether it be lawful to resist such a Prince, in case he should attempt to recover his Throne by Force?*

I say Yes: If his Empire were not determined by his Flight, it were not lawful to submit to his Heir, because no man can serve two Masters at once. But after I have once submitted to the other, I am then become his Subject, and he my lawful Sovereign; and therefore I am under the same obligation to defend the Successor, as I was before to defend the Predecessor, that is, against all men who unjustly invade him.

If therefore a Prince, by persecuting the True Religion, makes himself the Enemy of God, and of his *Church*, and the Justice of God overtake him, and he is driven out of his Countrey, by what means soever it happens; that Prince has by it lost all his Right to the Obedience of his Christian Subjects, and they not only may, but must submit to another, and defend him too, even against the former, if he shall attempt to put himself into a condition to renew and finish his former Persecution.

Without this, the state of the Christian were the worst of all others; for he were bound to suffer the Rages of Persecutors, when he need not; to help them to ruine the Church, when they could not do it without him; to recall them when they were forced to flee; to set them up again when God hath cast them from their Thrones; In short, to promote the Ruine of the Church as far as in him lieth.

FINIS.